

Attorney General Jennings urges consumers to report price gouging

With COVID-19 and a [State of Emergency](#) reshaping daily life in Delaware, Attorney General Kathy Jennings reminds consumers to stay vigilant about businesses illegally raising prices to take advantage of the public's anxiety.

"We will not tolerate preying on people's fear and uncertainty in a public health emergency," said Attorney General Jennings. "More than ever, we need to support one another. Exploiting a pandemic for profit is not just shameful and dangerous—it's also illegal."

Governor Carney's March 12 Declaration of a State of Emergency explicitly prohibits price gouging, defined as a 10 percent or greater increase in prices above normal levels, except when the increase is attributable to increased supplier costs:

No entity doing business in this state shall engage in price gouging as a result of this public health emergency, which shall mean an excessive price increase of goods or services offered for sale beyond the sale price in the usual course of business immediately prior to the date of this state of emergency, unless the increase is attributable to additional costs imposed on the supplier of such goods or services, such price not to increase more than 10% from the cost customarily applied in the usual course of business prior to this state of emergency. A violation of this paragraph shall be deemed an unlawful practice under § 2513 of Title 6 of the Delaware Code and a violation of Subchapter II of Chapter 25 of Title 6.

Consumers should report suspected price gouging to the

Delaware Department of Justice's Consumer Protection Unit through a formal complaint. Consumer complaint forms can be found at de.gov/consumer and should be submitted along with any supporting documentation to consumer.protection@delaware.gov. Consumers with additional questions can contact the DOJ's Consumer Protection Hotline at (800) 220-5424.

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